

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 793

EXDIS NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR CH UR BE

SUBJECT: PRC VISIT OF BELGIAN PRIME MINISTER TINDEMANS

SUMMARY: DURING APRIL 20 AND 21 TALKS WITH BELGIAN PRIME MINISTER TINDEMANS, CHINESE TOOK THEIR USUAL HARD LINE ON THE SOVIET UNION, WARNED OF THE INEVITABILITY OF WAR BETWEEN THE SUPERPOWERS AND ARGUED THE NEED FOR WESTERN EUROPEAN PREPAREDNESS AGAINST A SOVIET ATTACK. THEY CHARACTERIZED SINO-U.S. RELATIONS AS "GENERALLY GOOD" BUT WITH TENSIONS AND REITERATED THE CHINESE POSITION THAT THE U.S. WOULD HAVE TO WITHDRAW ITS FORCES FROM TAIWAN, RENOUNCE THE DEFENSE TREATY WITH THE ROC, AND SEVER DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH IT BEFORE PRC-US RELATIONS COULD BE NORMALIZED. THE CHINESE CHARACTERIZED THE NORTH KOREANS AS WANTING A "PEACEFUL AND INDEPENDENT REUNIFICATION" OF THE KOREAN PENINSULA.

1. IN THE ABSENCE OF AMBASSADOR GROOTHAERT WHO IS TRAVELING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, WE CHECKED WITH BELGIAN FIRST SECRETARY WHO PROVIDED US WITH THE FOLLOWING RUN DOWN OF PRIME MINISTER TINDEMAN'S APRIL 21 AND 22 TALKS WITH
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THE PRC VICE PREMIER CHI TENG-K'UEI AND FOREIGN MINISTER

CH-IAO KUAN-HUA. THE EMBOFF QUOTED BELGIAN TRANSCRIPTS OF THE MEETINGS BUT STRESSED THAT HE COULD NOT ADEQUATELY DESCRIBE THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE TALKS SINCE HE HAD NOT PARTICIPATED IN THEM.

2. SINO-U.S. RELATIONS - CHI TENG-K'UEI TOLD TINDEMANS THAT WHILE SINO-U.S. RELATIONS WERE GENERALLY GOOD, THE BASIC DIFFERENCES IN SOCIAL AND POLITICAL SYSTEMS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES CREATED CERTAIN TENSIONS IN THE RELATIONSHIP. HE SAID THE AMERICAN CANCELLATION OF THE VISIT BY THE CHINA PERFORMING ARTS TROUPE TO THE U.S. WAS AN EXAMPLE OF THESE TENSIONS. THE BASIC PROBLEM IN SINO-U.S. RELATIONS, ACCORDING TO CHI, WAS TAIWAN, AND THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE CONTAINS A "SUBTLE FORMULA ON THE TAIWAN ISSUE WORKED OUT BY SECRETARY KISSINGER." HE ADDED THAT THE UNITED STATES CONTINUES TO FEEL IT NEEDS TO MAINTAIN TROOPS IN TAIWAN AND HAS RECENTLY SENT ITS VICE PRESIDENT TO VISIT TAIPEI.

3. IN ORDER TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS WITH CHINA, CHI SAID, THE U.S. MUST ACT ACCORDING TO THE "JAPANESE FORMULA" AND 1) WITHDRAW ITS FORCES FROM TAIWAN; 2) RENOUNCE THE DEFENSE TREATY; AND 3) SEVER DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. HE REPEATED THIS STATEMENT TWICE MORE DURING THE DISCUSSION, GIVING THE BELGIANS THE IMPRESSION THE CHINESE WERE IMPATIENT ABOUT THE PACE OF NORMALIZATION. CHI SAID THE U.S. OWED CHINA A DEBT OVER TAIWAN, BUT HE ADDED THAT CHINA WAS PREPARED TO WAIT.

4. THE INEVITABILITY OF WAR. - DURING THE DISCUSSIONS CHI PLACED HEAVY EMPHASIS ON THE CHINESE VIEW OF THE INEVITABILITY OF WAR BETWEEN THE SUPERPOWERS. THE CENTER OF THE CONFLICT WOULD BE EUROPE AND THE PRESENCE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON BOTH SIDES WOULD NOT KEEP THE SUPERPOWERS FROM FIGHTING. IF NUCLEAR WEAPONS WERE USED THEY WOULD BE AIMED ONLY AT STRATEGIC OR LESS IMPORTANT TARGETS, SAID CHI, AND HE USED THE U.S. BOMBING OF HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI RATHER THAN TOKYO AND OSAKA DURING WORLD WAR II TO SUPPORT HIS CASE. CHI ASSERTED, HOWEVER, THAT THE WAR WOULD BE FOUGHT WITH CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS, WHERE THE SOVIETS NOW HAVE SUPERIORITY. HE WARNED THE BELGIANS TO STRENGTHEN EUROPEAN DEFENSES AND SAID THAT WHILE IN PRINCIPLE CHINA OPPOSES THE STATIONING OF FOREIGN TROOPS ABROAD, IT UNDERSTOOD THE NECESSITY OF KEEPING U.S. FORCES IN EUROPE. CHI ADDED THAT ALTHOUGH THE SOVIETS MAINTAINED TROOPS

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IN ASIA, THE MAIN FOCUS OF SOVIET INTENTIONS WAS EUROPE. IN THE GENERAL CONTEXT OF THESE STATEMENTS, THE CHINESE ALSO MENTIONED FAVORABLY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE SCHELESINGER'S ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS.

5. CHINESE ANTI-SOVIETISM. - THE BELGIANS WERE TREATED TO A VITUPERATIVE CHINESE DENUNCIATION OF THE SOVIET UNION. AT ONE POINT, CHI MADE A LONG STATEMENT IN WHICH HE CATALOGUED

SPECIFIC ACTIONS, SPEECHES AND EVENTS, WHICH HE SAID PROVED THE USSR'S ILL INTENTIONS TOWARD CHINA. ACCORDING TO CHI, THE SOVIETS HAD ENCOURAGED THE INDIANS TO ATTACK CHINA, HAD TORN UP THEIR ECONOMIC BLUEPRINTS AND WITHDRAWN THEIR TECHNICIANS, HAD WORKED AGAINST CHINA IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT, HAD ATTACKED CHINA ON ITS NORTHERN FRONTIER AND STILL CONTINUED TO WORK AGAINST CHINESE INTERESTS. HE CHARACTERIZED THE SINO-SOVIET SPLIT AS PRIMARILY IDEOLOGICAL BUT ALSO NATIONAL, AND SAID THE IDEOLOGICAL DISPUTE WITH THE SOVIETS WOULD CONTINUE FOR A THOUSAND YEARS.

6. EUROPE AND ENERGY. THE CHINESE EXPRESSED STRONG INTEREST IN PREMIER TINDEMANS' OPENING STATEMENT CONCERNING THE EUROPEAN MOVEMENT, THE EUROPEAN SECURITY CONFERENCE, AND EUROPE'S

ENERGY PROBLEMS. CH'IAO KUAN-HUA GAVE A LONG EXPOSITION OF CHINA'S VIEW OF THE ENERGY SITUATION CONCLUDING THAT EITHER COOPERATION OR CONFRONTATION WAS POSSIBLE WITH THE ARAB STATES. THE U.S., HE SAID, SEEMED TO PREFER A POLICY OF CONFRONTATION AND CITED AS AN EXAMPLE OUR POLICY ON FOOD GRAINS. CHIAO SAID THAT U.S. GOALS IN THE ENERGY FIELD DID NOT SERVE EUROPEAN OR JAPANESE INTEREST BECAUSE, UNLIKE THEM, THE U.S. IS NOT DEPENDENT ON ARAB OIL.

7. KOREA - CH'IAO ALSO TOLD TINDEMANS THAT NORTH KOREA WANTS A "PEACEFUL AND INDEPENDENT REUNIFICATION" OF THE KOREAN PENINSULA. HE NOTED THAT BELGIUM HAD SENT TROOPS TO KOREA IN 1950-53, BUT HAD WITHDRAWN ALL OF ITS FORCES AT THE END OF THE CONFLICT. HE CONCLUDED THE UNIFICATION OF KOREA IS INEVITABLE BUT IT MUST TAKE PLACE WITHOUT FOREIGN INTERFERENCE.

8. CHINESE LEADERS - TINDEMWMS' CHIEF HOST, PRC VICE PREMIER CH TENG-K'UEI, IMPRESSED THE BELGIANS AS A STRONG CONFIDENT CONFIDENTIAL

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AND DYNAMIC LEADER WHO WAS OBVIOUSLY CAPABLE OF CARRYING ON INTERESTING AND INFORMATIVE CONVERSATIONS WITH FOREIGN VISITORS. THE EMBOFF HAD NOTHING ON MAO'S CURRENT STATE OF HEALTH BUT PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI WAS BRIGHT AND ALERT AND APPEARED IN GOOD HEALTH WHEN TINDEMANS MET HIM.

9. THE EMBOFF SAID THE BELGIANS WERE WELL SATISFIED WITH THE RESULTS OF THE VISIT. TINDEMANS' MEETING WITH CHAIRMAN MAO, PREMIER CHOU AND NPC CHAIRMAN CHU TEH WERE APPRECIATED, AND THE BELGIANS FELT THE VISIT RESULTED IN A CLEARER UNDERSTANDING, IF NOT AGREEMENT OF BOTH SIDE'S VIEWS ON MAJOR INTERNATIONAL ISSUES.

10. FOR HONG KONG: GROOHTHAERT IS PLANNING TO REST A FEW DAYS IN HONG KONG BEFORE RETURNING TO PEKING. IF CONVENIENT,

YOU MIGHT GET HIS FIRST HAND IMPRESSIONS OF THE VISIT.
PLEASE DO NOT DIVULGE AT THIS POINT, HOWEAR, THAT WE HAVE BEEN
BRIEFED IN DETAIL BY BELGIAN EMBOFF HERE. WE WILL ALSO TALK WITH
HIM FURTHER FOLLOWING HIS RETURN TO PEKING.
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